

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

1. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: the prior art of record fails to teach or fairly suggest to one having ordinary skill in the art a method for making a perforated silicone gel layer comprising the steps of "heating the perforation device having a planar surface and a plurality of perforating elements extending from the planar surface", heating the perforation device to a curing temperature of an uncured silicone gel", "placing a layer of uncured silicone gel having a thickness directly onto the heated planar surface of the perforation device, wherein the perforating elements extend a distance therefrom greater than the thickness of the uncured silicone gel", and peeling the silicone gel away from the perforation device when at least a surface of the silicone gel layer has at least partially cured", in combination with the other recited step.

2. The prior art also fails to teach a method for making a perforated silicone gel layer, comprising the steps of "depositing a layer of uncured silicone gel having a thickness directly onto the planar surface of the perforation device, wherein the perforating elements extend a distance therefrom greater than the thickness of the uncured silicone gel; uniformly heating the perforation device to a curing temperature of an uncured silicone gel after the uncured silicone gel is deposited onto the planar surface, such that apertures are molded in the silicone gel layer as a result of the heat of the perforating elements; and discretely peeling the silicone gel layer away from the perforation device when at least a surface of the silicone gel layer adjacent the planar surface has at least partially cured, and the apertures in the silicone gel layer are

definitively formed and permanently molded in the predetermined pattern", in combination with the other recited elements.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kim M. Lewis whose telephone number is (571) 272-4796. The examiner can normally be reached on Wednesday to Friday, from 5:30 am to 4:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patricia Bianco, can be reached on (571) 272-4940. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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